

In spite of the unprecedented assault on the free press, journalists continue to take significant risks in the pursuit of truth and transparency. Journalists from Radio Free Asia have relentlessly covered the Chinese government's gross human rights abuses against the country's Uyghur minority, including mass internment and surveillance in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). If not for the work of these courageous reporters—many of whom are Uyghurs themselves, having to report on abuses exacted against their families and friends—Chinese authorities would be able to commit such abuses largely in secrecy. Instead, those who champion human rights will be able to use the reporting in order to hold this repressive government to account.

Over 200 years ago, our Founding Fathers had the foresight to recognize the importance of a free press to a fledgling democracy, enshrining it in our first amendment. Today, that importance cannot be overstated. Recognizing that societies where informed citizens can hold their governments accountable are more stable, secure, and prosperous, we have a responsibility to stand up for the fundamental right of free expression and free press. I join the international community in honoring and defending freedom of expression and the brave journalists seeking to tell a story that deserves to be told. In fact, the very fact the repressive governments, autocrats, and thugs continue to attack journalists is a tragic testament to the critical work they do. Just yesterday, the Maduro government in Venezuela took CNN off the air while the network was broadcasting live video of protestors being run over by military vehicles in Caracas, a transparent attempt by a criminal regime to silence journalists telling the story of brave Venezuelans standing up for their democratic aspirations.

This week, I introduced a resolution commemorating World Press Freedom Day. The resolution highlights increasing threats to freedoms of the press and expression worldwide, reaffirms the centrality of a free and independent press to the health of democracy, and reiterates freedom of the press as a priority of the United States in promoting democracy, human rights, and good governance. On this World Press Freedom Day, I call on the Trump administration to reverse course and recommit to advancing press freedom—both at home and abroad."

SENATE RESOLUTION 180—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT, DURING PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK, PUBLIC SERVANTS SHOULD BE COMMENDED FOR THEIR DEDICATION AND CONTINUED SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES

Mr. LANKFORD (for himself, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr.

RUBIO, Mr. CARPER, and Ms. HASSAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 180

Whereas the week of May 5 through May 11, 2019, has been designated as "Public Service Recognition Week" to honor employees of the Federal Government and State and local governments and members of the uniformed services;

Whereas Public Service Recognition Week provides an opportunity to recognize and promote the important contributions of public servants and to honor the diverse men and women who meet the needs of the United States through work at all levels of government and as members of the uniformed services;

Whereas millions of individuals work in government service and as members of the uniformed services, in every State, county, and city across the United States and in hundreds of cities abroad;

Whereas public service is a noble calling involving a variety of challenging and rewarding professions;

Whereas the ability of the Federal Government and State and local governments to be responsive, innovative, and effective depends on the outstanding performance of dedicated public servants;

Whereas the United States is a great and prosperous country, and public service employees contribute significantly to that greatness and prosperity;

Whereas the United States benefits daily from the knowledge and skills of the highly trained individuals who work in public service;

Whereas public servants—

(1) defend the freedom of the people of the United States and advance the interests of the United States around the world;

(2) provide vital strategic support functions to the Armed Forces and serve in the reserve components of the Armed Forces;

(3) fight crime and fires;

(4) ensure equal access to secure, efficient, and affordable mail service;

(5) deliver benefits under the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 301 et seq.), including benefits under the Medicare program under title XVIII of that Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.);

(6) fight disease and promote better health;

(7) protect the environment and parks in the United States;

(8) enforce laws guaranteeing equal employment opportunity and healthy working conditions;

(9) defend and secure critical infrastructure;

(10) help the people of the United States recover from natural disasters and terrorist attacks;

(11) teach and work in schools and libraries;

(12) develop new technologies and explore the Earth, the Moon, and space to help improve knowledge on how the world changes;

(13) improve and secure transportation systems;

(14) promote economic growth; and

(15) assist veterans of the Armed Forces;

Whereas members of the uniformed services and civilian employees at all levels of government—

(1) make significant contributions to the general welfare of the United States; and

(2) are on the front lines in the fight to defeat terrorism and maintain homeland security;

Whereas public servants work in a professional manner to build relationships with other countries and cultures in order to better represent the interests and promote the ideals of the United States;

Whereas public servants alert Congress and the public to government waste, fraud, and abuse, and dangers to public health;

Whereas the individuals serving in the uniformed services, as well as the skilled trade and craft employees of the Federal Government who provide support to their efforts—

(1) are committed to doing their jobs regardless of the circumstances; and

(2) contribute greatly to the security of the United States and the world;

Whereas public servants have bravely fought in armed conflicts in the defense of the United States and its ideals and deserve the care and benefits they have earned through their honorable service;

Whereas public servants—

(1) have much to offer, as demonstrated by their expertise and innovative ideas; and

(2) serve as examples by passing on institutional knowledge to train the next generation of public servants; and

Whereas the week of May 5 through May 11, 2019, marks the 35th anniversary of Public Service Recognition Week: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of the week of May 5 through May 11, 2019, as "Public Service Recognition Week";

(2) commends public servants for their outstanding contributions to the United States during Public Service Recognition Week and throughout the year;

(3) salutes government employees and members of the uniformed services for their unyielding dedication to, and enthusiasm for, public service;

(4) honors government employees and members of the uniformed services who have given their lives in service to the United States;

(5) calls upon a new generation to consider a career in public service as an honorable profession;

(6) encourages efforts to promote public service careers at every level of government; and

(7) supports efforts to promote an efficient and effective public service that serves the people of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 181—SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF THE WEEK OF APRIL 8 THROUGH APRIL 12, 2019, AS "NATIONAL SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL APPRECIATION WEEK"

Ms. HASSAN (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. CASEY, Ms. ERNST, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JONES, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. SMITH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 181

Whereas there are more than 1,000,000 specialized instructional support personnel serving the schools and students of the United States, including—

(1) school counselors;

(2) school social workers;

(3) school psychologists; and

(4) other qualified professional personnel, such as—

(A) school nurses;

(B) psychologists;

(C) social workers;

(D) occupational therapists;

(E) physical therapists;

(F) art therapists;

(G) dance and movement therapists;

(H) music therapists;

(I) speech-language pathologists; and

(J) audiologists;

Whereas specialized instructional support personnel provide school-based prevention

and early intervention services to reduce barriers to learning;

Whereas specialized instructional support personnel work with teachers, school leaders, and parents to ensure that all students are successful in school;

Whereas specialized instructional support personnel encourage multidisciplinary collaboration to promote student and school success;

Whereas specialized instructional support personnel provide educational, social, emotional, and behavioral interventions and activities that support—

- (1) student learning; and
- (2) teaching;

Whereas specialized instructional support personnel help to create environments that are safe, supportive, and conducive to learning;

Whereas safe and supportive school environments are associated with improved academic performance;

Whereas specialized instructional support personnel support—

- (1) student communication;
- (2) the development of social skills by students;
- (3) the physical wellness of students;
- (4) the physical development of students; and
- (5) the behavioral, emotional, and mental health of students; and

Whereas specialized instructional support personnel serve all students who struggle with barriers to learning: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of April 8 through April 12, 2019, as “National Specialized Instructional Support Personnel Appreciation Week”;

(2) recognizes that specialized instructional support personnel implement evidence-based practices to improve student outcomes;

(3) commends—

(A) those individuals who work as specialized instructional support personnel; and

(B) the individuals and organizations that support the efforts made by specialized instructional support personnel to promote and improve the availability of specialized instructional support services;

(4) encourages Federal, State, and local policymakers to work together to raise awareness of the importance of specialized instructional support personnel in school climate and education efforts;

(5) recognizes the important role of specialized instructional support personnel in efforts to improve mental health, reduce drug use, and improve overall community safety for students; and

(6) encourages experts to share best practices so that others can replicate the success of those experts.

SENATE RESOLUTION 182—RECOGNIZING THE DUTY OF THE SENATE TO CONDEMN MODERN MONETARY THEORY AND RECOGNIZING MODERN MONETARY THEORY WOULD LEAD TO HIGHER DEFICITS AND HIGHER INFLATION

Mr. PERDUE (for himself, Mr. BRAUN, Ms. ERNST, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. TILLIS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

S. RES. 182

Whereas noted economists from across the political spectrum have warned that the im-

plementation of Modern Monetary Theory (referred to in this preamble as “MMT”) would pose a clear danger to the economy of the United States;

Whereas, on March 4, 2019, former Secretary of the Treasury Lawrence H. Summers said that—

- (1) MMT is fallacious at multiple levels;
- (2) past a certain point, MMT leads to hyperinflation; and

(3) a policy of relying on a central bank to finance government deficits, as advocated by MMT theorists, would likely result in a collapsing exchange rate;

Whereas, on February 26, 2019, Jerome Powell, Chair of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, said: “The idea that deficits don’t matter for countries that can borrow in their own currency I think is just wrong”;

Whereas, on March 25, 2019, Janet Yellen, former Chair of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, disagreed with those individuals promoting MMT who suggest that “you don’t have to worry about interest-rate payments because the central bank can buy the debt”, stating: “That’s a very wrong-minded theory because that’s how you get hyperinflation”;

Whereas the March 2019 report entitled “How Reliable is Modern Monetary Theory as a Guide to Policy?” by Scott Sumner and Patrick Horan of the Mercatus Center at George Mason University found that—

(1) MMT—

(A) has a flawed model of inflation, which overestimates the importance of economic slack;

(B) overestimates the revenue that can be earned from the creation of money;

(C) overestimates the potency of fiscal policy, while underestimating the effectiveness of monetary policy;

(D) overestimates the ability of fiscal authorities to control inflation; and

(E) contains too few safeguards against the risks of excessive public debt; and

(2) an MMT agenda of having fiscal authorities manage monetary policy would run the risk of—

(A) very high debts;

(B) very high inflation; or

(C) very high debts and very high inflation, each of which may be very harmful to the broader economy;

Whereas the January 2019 report entitled “Modern Monetary Theory and Policy” by Stan Veuger of the American Enterprise Institute warned that “hyperinflation becomes a real risk” when a government attempts to pay for massive spending by printing money; and

Whereas the September 2018 report entitled “On Empty Purses and MMT Rhetoric” by George Selgin of the Cato Institute warned that—

(1) when it comes to the ability of Congress to rely on the Treasury to cover expenditures, Congress is, in 1 crucial respect, more constrained than an ordinary household or business is when that household or business relies on a bank to cover expenditures because, if Congress is to avoid running out of money, Congress cannot write checks in amounts exceeding the balances in the general account of the Treasury; and

(2) MMT theorists succeed in turning otherwise banal truths about the workings of contemporary monetary systems into novel policy pronouncements that, although tantalizing, are false: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) realizes that deficits are unsustainable, irresponsible, and dangerous; and

(2) recognizes—

(A) that the implementation of Modern Monetary Theory would lead to higher deficits and higher inflation; and

(B) the duty of the Senate to condemn Modern Monetary Theory.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 15—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF OCTOBER 28, 2019, AS “HONORING THE NATION’S FIRST RESPONDERS DAY”

Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. COTTON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. PETERS, Ms. ROSEN, and Mr. LANKFORD) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

S. CON. RES. 15

Whereas first responders include professional and volunteer fire, police, emergency medical technician, and paramedic workers in the United States;

Whereas, according to a 2017 compilation of data on the Emergency Services Sector in the United States by the Department of Homeland Security, “The first responder community comprises an estimated 4.6 million career and volunteer professionals within five primary disciplines: Law Enforcement, Fire and Rescue Services, Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Management, and Public Works.”;

Whereas first responders deserve to be recognized for their commitment to safety, defense, and honor; and

Whereas October 28, 2019, would be an appropriate day to establish as “Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) supports the designation of October 28, 2019, as “Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day”;

(2) honors and recognizes the contributions of first responders; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the contributions of first responders in the United States.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I have 8 requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 1, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Policy principles for a Federal data privacy framework.”

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 1, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.